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Department:
Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

SALDANHA BAY AQUACULTURE DEVELOPMENT ZONE (ADZ)

ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL OFFICER (ECO)

MONTHLY SUMMARY REPORT 6



September 2022



SALDANHA BAY AQUACULTURE DEVELOPMENT ZONE (ADZ) ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL OFFICER (ECO) MONTHLY SUMMARY REPORT 6

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Report prepared for:

Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
Branch: Fisheries Management



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADZ	Aquaculture Development Zone
AMC	Aquaculture Management Committee
Anchor	Anchor Research & Monitoring (Pty) Ltd
BB	Big Bay
BOM	Blue Ocean Mussels
BSASA	Bivalve Association of South Africa
C	Compliant
CF	Consultative Forum
DFFE	Department of Forestry Fisheries and the Environment
EA	Environmental Authorization
ECO	Environmental Control Officer
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMP	Environmental Management Plan (for individual farms)
EMPr	Environmental Management Programme
FMR	Farm Monitoring Report
FSO	Food Safety Office
IR	Incident Report
LST	Lipophilic Shellfish Toxin
MLRF	Marine Living Resources Fund
NC	Non-compliant
OBN	Outer Bay North
PC	Partial Compliance
SASH	South Atlantic Seafoods Holdings (Pty) Ltd
SB	Small Bay
SBIDZ	Saldanha Bay Industrial Development Zone
SBM	Saldanha Bay Municipality
SBOC	Saldanha Bay Oyster Company
SBWQFT	Saldanha Bay Water Quality Forum Trust
TNPA	Transnet Ports Authority

PROJECT TEAM

Details of the Environmental Control Officer

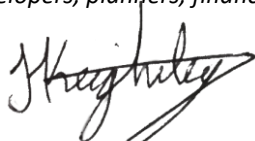
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Details of the Independence in terms of Chapter 5 of the National Environmental Management Act of 1998)

Box 1: Declaration of Independence of Environmental Control Officer

I, Jenna May Keightley hereby declare that I have no conflicts of interest related to the work of this report. Specifically, I declare that I have no personal financial interests in the property and/or development being assessed in this report, and that I have no personal or financial connections to the relevant property owners, developers, planners, financiers or consultants of the development.



30 September 2022

Box 2: Declaration of Independence of Reviewer

I, Amy Grace Wright, hereby declare that I have no conflicts of interest related to the work of this report. Specifically, I declare that I have no personal financial interests in the property and/or development being assessed in this report, and that I have no personal or financial connections to the relevant property owners, developers, planners, financiers or consultants of the development.

4 October 2022

Compliance with Appendix 7, GN. 326 of 2017

In terms of the requirements of the amended 2014 EIA Regulations (07 April 2017) and the recommendations for environmental audits under Regulation 34 and 35 (Table 1), the following should be noted:

- Anchor Research Monitoring (Anchor) follows the prescribed format for audit reports listed in Appendix 7 of GN. 326 of 2017.
- Anchor will report on compliance achieved and adequacy of the EMPr.
- Anchor does not assume the responsibility of ensuring compliance to all other prescriptions listed under Regulation 34 of GN. 326 of 2017 (such as seeking amendment to the EMPr or associated licences/permits). Ensuring compliance is the obligation of the proponent.

Table 1. Legal requirements for Audit Reports per Appendix 7, GN. 326 of 2017

Content of an Environmental Audit report	Section of this report
Details and expertise of independent ECO and author of this audit report.	Project Team
Declaration that the independent auditor is independent.	Project Team
Scope and the purpose of environmental audit report.	Section 1 and Section 2
Methodology adopted in preparing the environmental audit report.	Section 6
Evaluation of the ability of the EMPr to sufficiently:	Section 7
1. provide for continued avoidance, management and mitigation of environmental impacts and at closure.	
2. Ensure compliance with EA, EMPr and if applicable, closure plan.	
Description of any assumptions, uncertainties or gaps in knowledge.	Section 2.4

1 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

This Environmental Control Officer (ECO) summary report provides feedback on Saldanha Bay Aquaculture Development Zone (ADZ) compliance with the Environmental Authorisation (EA) and approved Environmental Management Programme (EMPr). This summary report is distributed to operators, members of the Consultative Forum (CF), members of the ADZ Management Committee (AMC) and the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE): Compliance Monitoring Directorate. The two primary purposes of this report include:

- Ensuring stakeholders are updated on ADZ activities; and,
- Highlighting areas for improvement in ADZ activities to allow for adaptive management.

This document is intended to highlight significant issues only and summarised monthly audits of the ADZ and individual farms. The summaries are drawn from the monthly ECO compliance and site inspection reports which are issued to the AMC and individual farms. The monthly ECO compliance and site inspection reports are retained by DFFE, Environmental Control Officer (ECO) and AMC for reference as they contain proprietary information.

2 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Saldanha Bay¹ has an established aquaculture industry with a number of mussel and oyster farms. Research determined that the Bay is able to support additional aquaculture production. To facilitate investment and development of additional aquaculture in the Bay, the then Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF)² proposed the establishment of an ADZ in Saldanha Bay for sea-based aquaculture.

The Branch Fisheries Management obtained Environmental Authorisation (EA) for the ADZ in Saldanha Bay on 8 January 2018, which (after appeals) was upheld on 7 June 2018. In terms of Condition 29 of the EA, the Branch Fisheries Management must appoint an independent Environmental Control Officer (ECO) for the construction and operation phases of the ADZ to ensure that mitigation/rehabilitation measures and recommendations (hereafter management measures) referred to in the EA are implemented and to ensure compliance with the conditions of the Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) (Table 2-1). The EA and EMPr have undergone several amendments which are incorporated into the ECO audit scope which includes the original EA issued on 8 January 2018 and its amendments on 10 July 2019 and 14 September 2020 (DEA ref. 14/12/16/3/3/1/1728, 14/12/16/3/3/1/1728/AM1 and 14/12/16/3/3/1/1728/AM2) and the approved EMPr dated August 2017 and its amendments dated May 2020 and June 2021 respectively.

1 This report is based on a template developed by SRK (South Africa) (Pty) Ltd with modifications from Errol Cerff and the current ECO to ensure consistency across ECO contracts. Their efforts in developing the template are acknowledged.

2 Following a Ministry reshuffle in mid-2019, Fisheries and Forestry has merged with The Branch Environment under the Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment.

Table 2-1. ADZ ECO appointments to date.

Company name	ECO	Period
Ecosense CC	Errol Cerff	September 2018 to August 2019
SRK Consulting (South Africa) (Pty) Ltd.	Kelly Armstrong	September 2019 to February 2020
Errol Cerff	Errol Cerff	March 2020 to September 2020
Errol Cerff	Errol Cerff	October 2020 to September 2021
Errol Cerff	Errol Cerff	October 2021 to March 2022
Anchor Research & Monitoring (ARM)	Jen Keightley	April 2022 to March 2025

2.1 Site Description

Saldanha Bay is located on the West Coast, approximately 120 km north of Cape Town and supports many economic activities. The Port of Saldanha is South Africa's premier iron ore export port and supports a number of industrial operations in the area. An aquaculture industry predominantly reliant on bivalves was established in Saldanha Bay prior to the establishment of the ADZ. Saldanha Bay is considered an historically important area for fishing activity and multiple fish processing plants are located therein. It is also a tourist destination and caters to various water-based tourism.

When the ADZ was originally proposed the Basic Assessment identified issues of concern including changes to the water quality, visual landscape, and productivity of the Saldanha Bay and Langebaan Lagoon environments. Measures to mitigate such impacts were detailed in the Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) and were made mandatory in the Environmental Authorisation (EA). A phased approach to production was adopted to monitor the impacts of expanding aquaculture before production levels were increased. The phased approach also allowed time to determine whether the mitigation measures had the desired effect of limiting impacts and only if mitigation measures proved effective could production be increased.

2.2 Project Description

The Saldanha Bay ADZ comprises 4 precincts, namely Small Bay, Big Bay, Outer Bay North, and Outer Bay South (Figure 2.1). The BA Report summarised the scope for expansion in the ADZ and comprised a mix of finfish and bivalve farms (Table 2-2). Details of each existing lease are depicted in Figure 2.2 and Figure 2.3.

Table 2-2. ADZ precincts in Saldanha Bay and area suitable for cultivation.

Precinct	ADZ Area (ha)	Area suitable for bivalve cultivation (ha)	Area suitable for fish and bivalve cultivation (ha)
Small Bay (SB)	163	163	-
Big Bay (BB)	409	367	42
Outer Bay North (OBN)	216	76	140
Outer Bay South (OBS)	96	-	96
Total	884	606	278

Sea-based activities associated with aquaculture in the ADZ include:

- Servicing and maintenance of aquaculture structures (such as rafts, lines, cages).
- Harvesting of cultivated species.
- Initial processing of bivalves, including de-clumping and grading, typically on the raft or support vessel.
- Vessel trips between the shore and aquaculture areas.

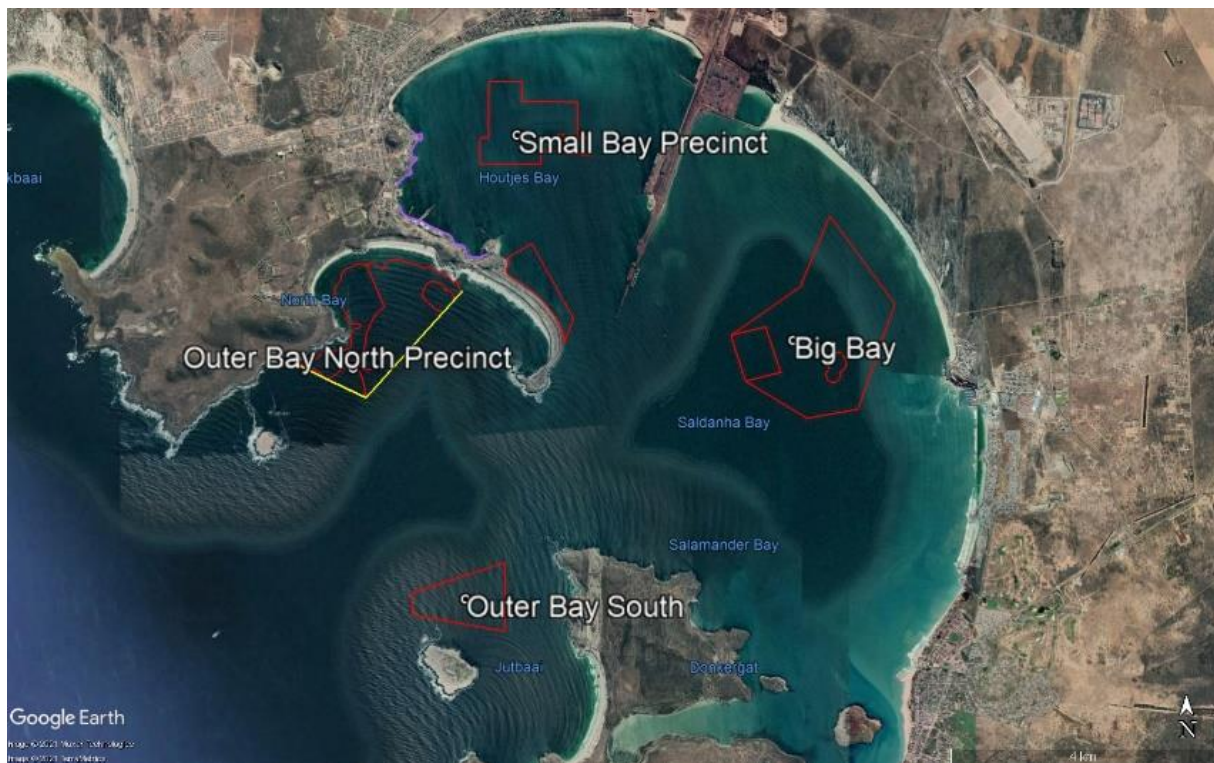


Figure 2.1. Saldanha Bay ADZ precincts.



Figure 2.2. (Left) Bivalve culture in Small Bay and (right) mixed bivalve and finfish culture in Big Bay.

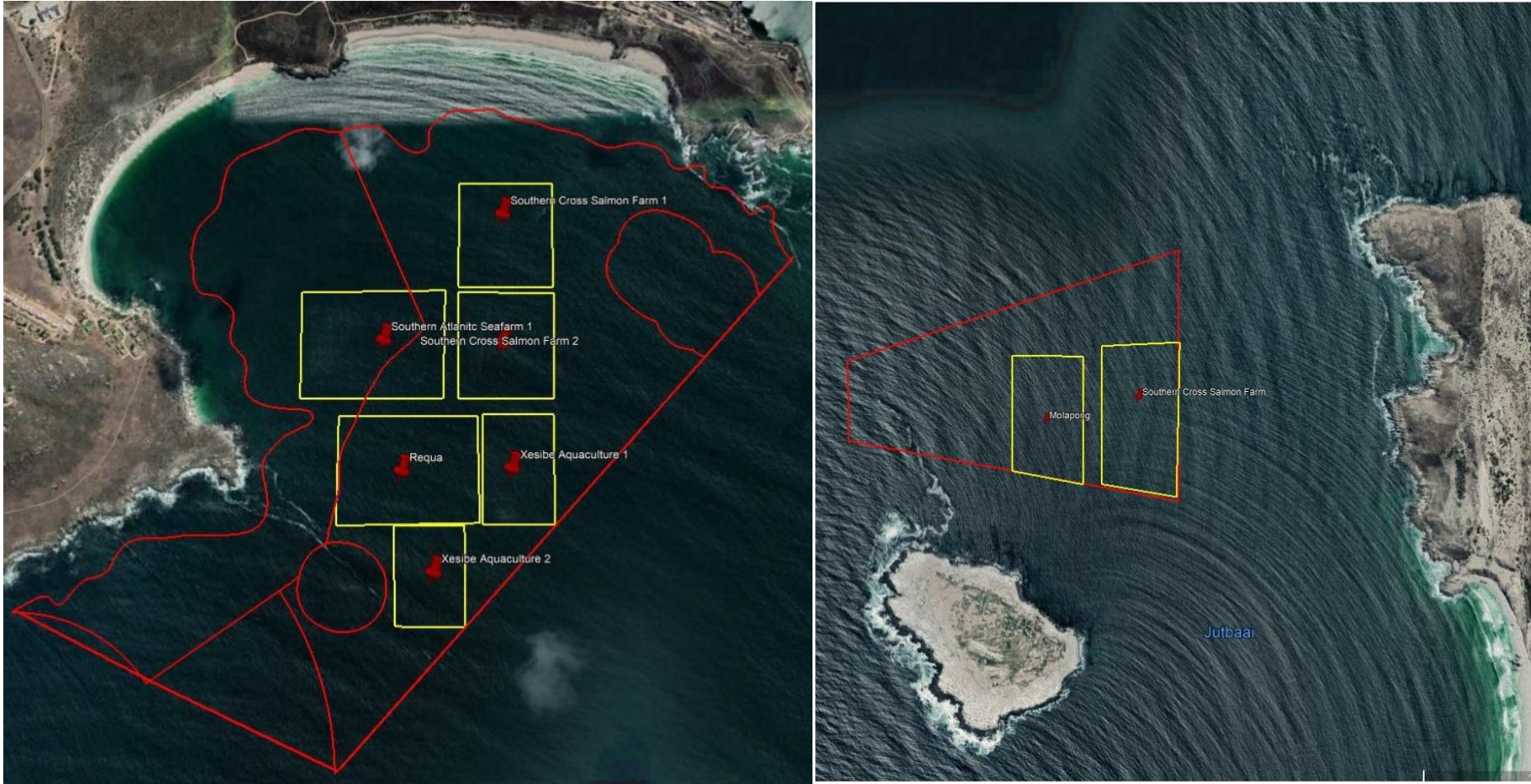


Figure 2.3. (Left) Bivalve culture in Outer Bay North and (right) finfish culture in Outer Bay South.

2.3 Operators in the ADZ

An essential aspect to assessing actual impact and possibility of expanding operations relies on accurate production data received from each farm. Farms submit production figures in the form of a monthly Farm Monitoring Report (FMR) to the ECO and DFFE. As such all farms are required to submit FMRs in terms of the aquaculture permit. Since this is essential to the monitoring of impacts, tracking compliance with this requirement will form part of the ECO duties even though this is not specified in the EMPr. A list of operators in the ADZ as of September 2022 is presented in Table 2-3.

Table 2-3. Operators in the Saldanha Bay ADZ.

Farm name	Status	Species	Precinct	Right No. MAQUA
African Olive Trading 232 (Pty) Ltd	Active	Mussels	Small Bay	1027
Aqua Foods SA (Pty) Ltd	Active	Mussels/ oysters	Small Bay & Big Bay	1029
Blue Lagoon Products (Pty) Ltd	Active	Oysters	Big Bay	1057
Blue Ocean Mussels (Pty) Ltd	Active	Mussels/ Oysters	Small Bay	11828 & 0004
Blue Sapphire Pearls CC	Active	Mussels / Oysters	Small Bay	0006
Imbaza Mussels (Pty) Ltd	Active	Oysters	Small Bay	0019
K2019005713 (Pty) Ltd	Active	Mussels	Big Bay	1053
K2019005725 (Pty) Ltd	Active	Mussels	Big Bay	1052
Madima General Agriculture Trading (Pty) Ltd	Active	Mussels	Big Bay	1048
Molapong Aquaculture (Pty) Ltd	Decommissioned. Right still allocated.	Salmon	Big Bay	1033
Mika Growers (Pty) Ltd	Active	Mussels	Big Bay	1047
Mmm Agriconsult (Pty) Ltd	Active	Mussels	Big Bay	1045
Pluto Mussels and Trading (Pty) Ltd	Active	Mussels	Big Bay	1051
Requa Enterprises (Pty) Ltd	Right still allocated.	Mussels	Outer Bay North	1035
Saldanha Bay Oyster Company (Pty) Ltd	Active	Oysters	Big Bay	0012 & 0007
Salmar Trading (Pty) Ltd	Active	Oysters	Small Bay	1032
Simunye Mussels (Pty) Ltd	Active	Mussels	Big Bay	1047
Southern Atlantic Sea Farms (Pty) Ltd	Active	Mussels	Big Bay / Outer Bay North	1028
Southern Cross Salmon Farming (Pty) Ltd	Active	Mussels	Outer Bay North	1037
Ulwazi Kukutya (Pty) Ltd	Right still allocated.	Mussels	Big Bay	1050
West Coast Aquaculture (Pty) Ltd	Active	Mussels/ oysters	Small Bay & Big Bay	0003
West Coast Oyster Growers CC	Active	Oysters/ Mussels	Small Bay & Big Bay	0013
Xesibe Aquaculture Project (Pty) Ltd	Active	Mussels	Outer Bay North	1046

2.4 Limitations and Assumptions of the Audit

The audit findings are based on information relayed in documentation, during interviews as well as the observations made during physical site inspections, at a specific point in time. Although the site inspection can reveal evidence of activities carried out during the month for which the audit covers, it cannot fully show the auditor what activities have been carried out on site. The auditor, therefore, must rely on observations made on the day of the audit as well as the information provided by the operators, proponent, and other relevant stakeholders in order to make conclusions about compliance during the preceding month.

It should be noted that the role of the ECO is to independently monitor compliance, to implement the Audit Standard, as well as to provide input and guidance to the DFFE Project Management Team on a strategic level. Due to the independent nature of the ECO role, the ECO appointment is not to enforce compliance but to monitor. Compliance with the provisions contained in the EMP, EA, Permit or any condition imposed by the environmental approvals shall become the responsibility of DFFE: Chief Directorate Aquaculture and Economic Development or DFFE: Compliance and Monitoring.

3 INCIDENTS DURING THE LAST MONTH

No incidents were reported in the September 2022 audit period.

4 COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED DURING THE LAST MONTH

Communications of note received by the ECO during the September 2022 audit period included:

- Request from Transnet Ports Authority (TNPA) Environmental Officer (EO) requesting the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the ADZ as they are in the process of updating the Environmental management plan (EMP) for TNPA dredging.
- Distributing the ADZ expansion letter to the three new incumbent farmers (CEX, Well Done Works and Wada Enterprises).
- Expansion requests and production projections from ADZ farmers as requested by the AMC.
- Distributing the ADZ ECO reports to AMC, CF, Operators and Director Compliance.
- Beach clean-up report and photographic evidence for Small Bay beaches from Imbaza Mussels.
- Discussions with BSASA and several operators who have stepped up to conduct beach clean-ups for Small Bay, Big Bay (Spreeuwalle beach), Marcus Island (Small Bay side) and Outer Bay North beaches.
- Notification of beach clean-ups that occurred from Dial Rock to Mossgas beach in Small Bay.

5 SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE ADZ IN THE LAST MONTH

5.1 Environmental Monitoring

None for the month of September 2022.

5.2 Monthly ECO audits

The September 2022 ECO site inspection was conducted on 14 September 2022 and representatives from four farms were interviewed (Table 5-1). No evidence of non-compliance was observed at these farms.

Table 5-1. Farms and representatives interviewed for the September 2022 ECO site inspection.

Farm	Precinct	Representative	Date
African Olive Trading	Small Bay	Nolan Adams	2022/09/14
West Coast Oyster Growers	Small Bay and Big Bay	Mauritz Viljoen	2022/09/14

5.3 Bay user safety

South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA) conducted an audit of navigational aids associated with the ADZ in December 2020. SAMSA has subsequently developed a draft Aids to Navigation (AtoN) plan. This will entail the installation of additional safety marker buoys according to the SAMSA regulations and well as stipulations in the ADZ EA, to ensure that the outer limits of the ADZ are clear to all Bay users. This report is currently in draft format; however further engagements are required with relevant stakeholders before the report can be finalised by SAMSA. It is anticipated that this draft will be finalised in November 2022 and presented to the AMC. Thereafter it shall be issued to Operators and the CF for information purposes.

5.4 External Audit

None to report at this time. The next external audit report is due in February 2023.

6 ECO AUDIT APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

Monthly ECO audits comprise monthly site inspections using the approved checklist and audit standard; rotational compliance audits on individual farms using monthly Farm Monitoring Reports and supporting documentation; ongoing regular audits of compliance of the ADZ administration as a whole. The monthly ECO audit cycle involves communication with operators and the AMC as required as well as developing and distributing the following documents:

- Detailed monthly ADZ compliance reports issued to the AMC and Compliance Monitoring Directorate at DFFE.

- ECO site inspection report issued to operators and the AMC.
- Summary report (this report) submitted to the CF, AMC, and operators.

7 ECO AUDIT RESULTS

7.1 ADZ Management

This evaluation is based on engagements between the ECO and the Branch Fisheries Management officials regarding management measures and implementation thereof. On 18 August 2022 the ADZ Management Committee (AMC) decided to increase the ungraded bivalve production threshold from 10 000 tons per annum (tpa) to 12 500 tpa. This decision is based on condition 49 of the EA which allows for phased increase in aquaculture production if monitoring results indicate that the environmental health of the bay has been maintained. The AMC is satisfied that the monitoring results to date indicate that the environmental health is acceptable, however an adaptive management approach and ongoing monitoring is essential to ensure that the environmental health of the bay system is maintained. Therefore, the AMC adopted the precautionary approach by increasing the limit on annual ungraded shellfish production threshold by an additional 2 500 tpa over the current production of 10 000 tpa. Graded production volumes in the ADZ are recoded on a monthly basis. Production volumes for September 2022 and cumulative production to date supplied by the Branch Fisheries Management using the approved formula to calculate total ungraded production are presented in Table 7-1. Production is below the current limit of 10 000 tpa ungraded shellfish (5 000 tpa graded) for the first two years of ADZ operation as stipulated in the ADZ EA. Per the EA from year 3 bivalve production may be increased by an additional 5 000 tons but only if monitoring results indicate that the environment health has been maintained and impacts remain manageable. To ensure sustainable development, the Saldanha Bay Aquaculture Development Zone Management Committee (AMC) must consider the results and reports from the environmental monitoring which took place in June 2022 as well scientific recommendations, and it will inform the possible increase in production.

Table 7-1. ADZ bivalve production (tons). The Approximate ungraded production is based on the conservative assumption that the ratio of ungraded to graded shellfish volume is ~2:1.

ADZ Precinct	Monthly graded production August 2022	Graded production Feb 2019-Jan 2020 (Year 1 prod)	Graded production Feb 2020-Jan 2021 (Year 2 prod)	Graded production Feb 2021 - Jan 2022 (Year 3 prod)	Graded production Feb 2022 – Jan 2023 (Year 4)
Small Bay	189	2847	1936	2921	1480
Big Bay	84	189	240	480	365
Outer North Bay	33	433	297	330	118
Outer South Bay	-	-	-	-	-
Total graded	305	3 468	2473	3731	1964
Approximate ungraded production	574	6 497	4 707	7 228	3787

7.2 Farm Management

Accurate reporting of operational production data is critical to assess any potential environmental impacts noted in the Saldanha Bay system that may be the result of ADZ operations. Therefore, the ADZ Management Committee (AMC) has decided to focus monthly ECO audits on verifying production values. To this end, Farm Monitoring Reports (FMRs) are to be completed and submitted by all operators prior to the 15th of the following month along with verification documentation (such as invoices or other means of tracking production). Each farm must submit separate FMRs for each precinct in which they farm, as well as separate FMRs for each species farmed. Therefore, the feedback given looks at the number of FMRs submitted.

A large improvement in meeting the deadline for submission was observed in September 2022 with all but one FMRs submitted on time. Out of a possible 26 FMRs, 25 were submitted on time and all farms with sales provided supporting documents (Table 7-2).

Table 7-2. FMR Submission status, supporting production verification documents and visual inspection logs. Late submissions, lack of supporting documents and not providing visual logs are highlighted in red.

Farm name	Location	Species	Date	Supporting docs	Visual Inspection Log
African Olive Trading	Small Bay	Mussels	2022/09/15	yes	yes
Aqua Foods SA	Small Bay	Mussels/oysters	2022/09/08	yes	yes
Aqua Foods SA	Big Bay	Mussels/oysters	N/A – not actively farming		
Blue Lagoon Products	Big Bay	Oysters	2022/09/15	yes	yes
Blue Ocean Mussels	Small Bay	Mussels	2022/09/13	yes	yes
Blue Sapphire Pearls	Big Bay	Mussels	2022/09/14	yes	yes
Blue Sapphire Pearls	Small Bay	Oysters	2022/09/14	yes	yes
Cex Enterprises	Big Bay	Mussels	Not operational		
Chapmans Aquaculture	North Bay	Mussels	Not operational		
Imbaza Mussels	Small Bay	Oysters	2022/09/08	yes	yes
K2019005713	Big Bay	Mussels	2022/09/14	yes	yes
K2019005725	Big Bay	Mussels	2022/09/14	yes	yes
Lagoon Aqua Farm	Big Bay	Mussels	Not operational		
Madima General Agriculture Trading	Big Bay	Mussels	2022/09/14	N/A (No sales)	no
Molapong	Big Bay	Salmon	Not operational		
Mika Growers	Big Bay	Mussels	2022/09/14	yes	yes
Mmmagri Consult	Big Bay	Mussels	2022/09/14	N/A (No sales)	no
Oystercatcher Aquaculture		Seaweed	Not operational		
Pluto Mussels and Trading	Big Bay	Mussels	2022/09/14	yes	yes
Requa Enterprises	North Bay	Mussels	2022/09/16	N/A – not active	no
Saldanha Bay Oyster Company	Small Bay	Oysters	2022/09/15	yes	yes
Saldanha Bay Oyster Company	Big Bay	Oysters	N/A		
Salmar Trading	Small Bay	Oysters	2022/09/05	yes	yes

Farm name	Location	Species	Date	Supporting docs	Visual Inspection Log
Simunye Mussels	Big Bay	Mussels	2022/09/14	yes	yes
Southern Atlantic Sea Farms 1	Big Bay	Mussels	2022/09/14	N/A (No sales)	no
Southern Atlantic Sea Farms 2	North Bay	Mussels	2022/09/14	N/A (No sales)	no
Southern Cross Salmon Farm	North Bay	Mussels	2022/09/14	N/A (No sales)	no
Stander Aquaculture			Not operational		
Ulwazi Kukutya	Big Bay	Mussels	2022/09/14	N/A (No sales)	no
Wada Projects	Big Bay	Mussels	Not operational		
Well Done Works	Big Bay	Mussels	Not operational		
West Coast Aquaculture	Small Bay, Big Bay	Mussels/oysters	2022/09/14	N/A (No sales)	no
West Coast Oyster Growers BB	Big Bay	Mussels/oysters	2022/09/14	yes	yes
West Coast Oyster Growers SB	Small Bay	Oysters	2022/09/14	yes	yes
Xesibe Aquaculture	North Bay	Mussels	2022/09/14	yes	yes

7.3 Site Inspections

On-water inspections of five farms occurred during the September 2022 ECO site inspection on 14 September 2022 including Blue Ocean Mussels (BOM), Requa Enterprises, Saldanha Bay Oyster Company (SBOC) Big Bay farm, West Coast Oyster Growers Big Bay and Small Bay farms. No evidence of new non-compliances were observed at these five farms. Due to non-compliances with the infrastructure guidelines during the July 2022 audit period the ECO requested farm maintenance plans from BOM and SBOC. These maintenance plans were provided on 20 July 2022, reviewed by the ECO and AMC, comments were incorporated into maintenance plans and plans were implemented. Progress on the maintenance of BOM and SBOC farms were observed at the September 2022 site inspection, and these will be monitored on a monthly basis by the ECO for the duration of the maintenance plan. It is anticipated that SBOC Big Bay farm will be fully maintained by the end of October 2022. Given the extent of maintenance and repairs required on BOM's site it is only anticipated that all rafts will be fully restored over a three-year period.



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